

THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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CHAPTER ONE

THE four young Tracys, two little and two big, stood in the dooryard and stared at the house which was to be their home. They had not expected to like it, but this was worse than they had thought it would be. Little Rosette clung to her big sister Isabel and sobbed that she wanted her mother. Small Luke muttered to himself that he never would have come here if it hadn't been for the chance of getting a look at the Pearl Stairway in the Cliff that Daddy had always told them about.

As for Peter, the oldest of the four, he whistled and said in his offhand way:

"Oh, come now; we mustn't be fussy. No house can look pleasant while it's being papered and painted and white-washed. It will feel better in a few days and so shall we."

"If Daddy had only been well enough so that he and Mother could have come with us," sighed Isabel, "it would have been just fun picnicking in the clutter. Well, the first thing is to find Mrs. Strong, I suppose."

Mrs. Strong was the caretaker who was staying in the house to see that the repairs were properly done. She lived just across the road from the old Tracy farmhouse and her husband came over every night and morning to milk the old black cow at the barn and do the other chores.

As they stood hesitating, Mrs. Strong came to the door of the house and beckoned. She was a tall, resolute-looking lady with a dust cap on her head and a broom in her hand. She did not look at all glad to see them.

"I've got a bite to eat set out for you on the kitchen table," she called. "You'd better go around to the back door, or some of you will be sure to fall into the



whitewash pails. This way, and be quick about it!"

She came out and led them around to the kitchen entrance where she ushered them into a big, old-fashioned room which smelled of paint and soap suds. On an oilcloth-covered table was set out a big loaf of bread with a long knife ready to cut it. Also, there was a slab of butter, a great kettle of stew set right in the middle of the table, and a pile of dishes beside it. Everything was tidy and clean, but nothing looked homelike or comfortable.

However, they were very hungry, having been traveling since daylight. So even little Rosette scrubbed the tears off her cheeks and enjoyed her bowl of stew.

Mrs. Strong stopped long enough to explain matters to them. "Your bedrooms are upstairs here at the back of the house. You'll have to come and go this way" — showing them a twisty flight of stairs leading up from a little back entry — "Three times a day I'll have something to eat set out for you on this table. The rest of the time you must take care of yourselves and keep out from underfoot. You two older ones are big enough to get along and I'm sure I've got my hands full."

They were glad enough to get away outdoors as soon as they had finished eating. It was a sunshiny afternoon in early July and the old farm was a pleasant place. It had been Grandfather Tracy's home and their own father had played here as a boy. A beautiful wide river

flowed past the west end of the house. There was an orchard that began at the back-door step and ran up a long slope to a stone wall, beyond which lay acres of pasture land.

Peter waved his hand towards a path that led up through the orchard to this wall. "By that path," he said impressively, "we shall start off tomorrow to find the Stairway in the Cliff. Think of *seeing* it, after hearing about it all our lives. I'm sorry Dad can't be here to show it to us but it will be fun to go and find it."

"Can't we go right off?" asked Luke excitedly.

Peter shook his head. "Too late to start on such a long tramp. The place is at the farther side of the big pasture. Morning is the time to begin an expedition like that."

"Then let's go look over the wall, anyhow," cried Luke, racing away up the orchard path.

The others followed and stood in a row looking over the wall into the pasture, a pleasant place full of clumps of low blueberry bushes and jungles of small pines. Between the tangled knolls short green grass grew and an old black cow was cropping it as she strayed about. Far away at the top of a long slope lay thick woods and below those woods, Peter told them, was the famous Pearl Stairway in the Cliff.

The sight of a cluster of ripe blueberries made Peter tumble over the wall and Luke climbed after him. Isabel knew that Rosette's little feet were too tired for such rough walking, so the sisters sat down in the shade of a tall old apple tree on the orchard side of the wall. Rosette still looked so forlorn that Isabel glanced about to find some amusement for her.

"Look, Rosette, let's play tea party on this nice flat rock. I'll make some dishes of these big oak leaves behind the wall and we'll trim the table with flowers."

They were sitting in a perfect pool of white daisies and red clover, not to mention buttercups, blue vetch, and black-eyed Susans. It was pretty work to trim the rock table and Rosette was much delighted with the oak-leaf dishes set in round wreaths made of clover heads. They gave quite a gay air to the make-believe feast.

Evidently the old black cow thought so too, for she came up quietly, reached over the wall and picked up one of those wreaths with her long pink tongue. The child shrieked and clung to Isabel, who was a little startled herself, not being used to cows as yet.

"Peter, Peter," implored Rosette, "come and drive her away."

To their surprise it was not Peter who answered the call but a big boy they had never seen before. He appeared as suddenly as if he had risen out of the ground.

"Hurrup, Moo-Cow," he ordered. "Nobody invited you to this party."

Then as "Moo-Cow" cantered away with her tail in the air, he came and looked over the wall at the two girls and their outdoor table.

"Looks fine," he said pleasantly, "but seems to me something to eat would help out. It always does at a party. Have a few blueberries. I've got a pailful besides these. If you are the folks that own the place they're all yours, anyhow."

Over the wall he handed a broad birch-bark dish filled with such blueberries as the two city girls had never seen in their lives.

He nodded rather absent-mindedly as they thanked him. Then he said suddenly to Isabel:

"Look here, it's none of my business, but if the little girl is afraid of the cow why don't you go and sit under some tree farther away, where the old thing can't reach your table decorations. There's a fine big rock with a flat top down there in the middle of the orchard."

He pointed it out so anxiously that Isabel laughed at his serious face. "You didn't suppose," she asked merrily, "that we really believed a cow would eat us alive? Rosette has got over her scare and I chose this tree because it is so big and shady. I never saw such a big apple tree."

She looked up, as she spoke, into the thick green cloud of leaves overhead, and then she gave a start, for, from a stout horizontal branch about twelve feet from the ground, dangled a pair of legs. They were a man's legs clad in khaki and ending in a pair of soaked and muddy shoes. To be sure, there was nothing very startling in the mere fact of somebody being up in an apple tree with his legs hanging down, but wasn't it queer that

he should have been sitting there all this time without moving or speaking to let them know he was there?

By this time Peter and Luke with their mouths and hands full of blueberries had come to look over the wall from the pasture.

Both boys instantly saw those dangling legs in the tree and Luke said in a loud whisper, "Who's that?"

The strange boy seemed to think he was the one to answer to this question but he stammered over it a little.

"I — I — it seems to be some kind of a man," he said in a low voice. "I guess he climbed up there to be by himself and think things over. Figuring out something, I shouldn't wonder a bit. My idea is that we'd better go away and leave him."

Peter looked shrewdly at the boy and then at the legs in the tree. "You know something about that person up there."

Where There's a Will There's a Way

By Emma Florence Bush

HAROLD and Donald sat on a rock in the middle of the cornfield with their chins on their hands, looking off into the autumn sunshine.

"All the boys are going to camp for Christmas vacation," said Harold, "all except us. Some of them their fathers will pay for, and some of them are earning the money. We will be the only boys in the class that don't go. It seems as if we must go some way."

"Let's ask father tonight," said Donald; "it's only nine dollars apiece for a whole week. Perhaps he can afford to let us go."

But father shook his head. "That would be eighteen dollars," he said; "and too much for me to afford for a week's pleasure. I will tell you what I will do. You say some of the boys are earning their money. If you can earn half of the money it will cost I will furnish the other half."

"But there is nothing we can do to earn money here on the farm," said Harold. "And the boys in the village have all the things that will earn money there. They are right on the spot and not almost a mile away."

"Well," said father, rising to get ready for bed, "there is my offer. Take it or leave it. I will pay half the expense, and you may use anything you may find on the farm to earn money with, and that is all the help I can give you."

The next afternoon found the boys sitting on their favorite rock in the cornfield, thinking hard. They had discussed every plan they could think of to raise the money, but none seemed practicable. Now Harold was idly whittling away at a pumpkin Jack-o'-lantern and Donald sat absent-mindedly watching him.

If he wants us to go away why doesn't he say so himself? Of course he can hear every word we speak."

They all jumped as a big voice boomed suddenly from the cloud of leaves overhead. "I do say so! I was hoping you would go without being told, so I kept still. You can't go too soon to suit me."

Peter leaned over the wall, trying hard to see the man's face, but it was hidden among the thick foliage. "All right," agreed the boy. "We'll go, but say, you know it's our apple tree."

"Are you going?" roared the voice, and then it added with a big laugh: "Do, if you please, and be quick about it."

"We'd better not provoke him," whispered the strange boy with a mysterious glance up into the tree. "Come on; I promised the Captain I'd bring him some blueberries before I went away."

(To be continued)

All at once he gave a whoop and sat up straight.

"What's the matter?" asked Harold, almost dropping his pumpkin at the sudden movement on the part of Donald.

"That pumpkin," said Donald. "I was in the fruit store today where a lady was buying some fruit. She looked at the pumpkins sitting on the shelf, and she said to the fruit man, 'I wish they were Jack-o'-lanterns instead of pumpkins. I wish you carried Jack-o'-lanterns for people who cannot make their own.'"

"Well?" asked Harold, watching Donald fall to and begin to carve another pumpkin.

"Well," said Donald, cutting away busily; "what's to hinder each of us making a dandy Jack-o'-lantern and taking it along for a sample? You take the East side and I will take the West, and we will find out at every house if they are going to give a party or want any Jack-o'-lanterns for Hallowe'en."

From house to house the boys went. In some instances they met with refusal; in some cases they sold one or two; but they were almost ready to give up in despair when Donald found the lady who had asked for the Jack-o'-lanterns in the store.

"Will I take some?" she asked. "I will take a dozen for the party. And I know where you can sell a lot more. Several of my friends in the city are giving Hallowe'en parties and would be glad to buy all you can make. Come right in and telephone them now."

Father was very glad to give them all the pumpkins they wanted and the two boys worked away busily every moment they had out of school. Orders came pouring in from the city thick and fast, for

each Jack-o'-lantern was carefully and nicely made, and the tin bank where they kept their money grew heavier and heavier.

The day after Hallowe'en they counted it. "Twenty-three dollars," said Harold. "Why, that will pay all our expenses and leave something for spending money beside; father won't need to help us at all."

But father insisted on paying his half,

and suggested that they bank the rest ready to use at some future time for a similar purpose. "And keep your eyes open, boys," he said, "and see how much you can earn to add to it. You have learned that it isn't living in the village or city that gives a boy a chance to earn, it is taking advantage of what lies at hand, or, to quote an old proverb my grandfather was always quoting, 'Where there's a will there's a way.'"



THE CROW'S NEST

BY
WAITSTILL
HASTINGS
SHARP

Text: Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. — Matthew 7:7

ONCE there lived a philosopher called Aristotle —

What is a philosopher?

A philosopher is "a man who loves the truth." The word comes from two other words, one meaning "lover" and the other meaning "truth." We add them like this:

Truth	
Lover	
<hr/>	
Philosopher	

Well, as I was saying when someone asked a question, there lived a philosopher called Aristotle. He was a Greek, and such a great man that when people name the twelve greatest men of history, the name Aristotle is found among them. He didn't fight, he didn't make money, he wasn't a champion athlete —

But what a Thinker he was! Yes, a wise, clear thinker about the Happy Life, who was born three hundred and eighty-four years before Christ. The generals, and the rich men, and the boxers of his day, are nearly all forgotten, but 2,310 years after his birth we name a thinker with the twelve greatest men of history!

Once Aristotle said these words:

"Questioning is one-half of knowledge."

Study that carefully for sixty seconds by the watch.

1. What does it mean?

2. Why am I writing about it in "The Crow's Nest?"

(1.) It means that the person who knows how to ask a wiser question than his neighbor asks, or who knows enough to ask some kind of question while his neighbor lets a new, strange fact or thought go by, is bound to be a wiser, abler man than his dull neighbor. And this applies to girls, too!

It means that one-half of what we

know should be coming to us by the "question route" — that if a man knows 100 things he could know 100 more, if he only knew enough to ask what your teachers call "intelligent questions," questions that pry up a hard problem as a crowbar pries rocks out of a New England pasture.

Babies are the sweetest things in the whole world. But we all want to grow up, and one of the best ways to prove that we are growing up is to do this when you meet a new fact or a new thought:

1. Look at it very carefully.

2. Think about what you see. Then

3. Try to ask just one question that will open the whole thing like the right key in a door. But keep trying until you succeed.

(2.) Why am I writing to all the Church Schools about this?

Well, I admit that it hasn't looked very much like a Church-School lesson so far, but NOW it will. I have asked you to think of this because *each good Church School in its opening services and each good class in its class session should be bringing up a lot of NEW thoughts and teaching a lot of NEW things* that we simply haven't the time or the place to study or think about in our day schools. Of course the only way to use what we learn in our Church Schools is to think about it and talk it over and live it during the week, but we should be learning and thinking about a lot of new things each Sunday. That's what Sunday is for.

Here is where these wise questions come in. Study your home lesson very carefully and put down on a slip of paper all the hard questions that you can't answer. Just before the class begins, ask your teacher for enough time to get the right answers in class. (She will be so surprised that she'll think that you are a new student!) And if the class work doesn't clear things up, just remind your teacher about her promise and get an answer before you go home. Sometimes the class work will bring out a new word that you haven't heard before. Nail it quick! Don't let it go by! And in the end, if you never let a new word or a new thought go by without picking it up, you will be richer than if you were stopping to pick up dollar bills on the sidewalk.

Remember that Church School is a little time out of the busy week for think-

ing and learning about new names and new facts and new ideas, and great names and great facts and great ideas, and that the only way to get the most out of your Church-School time is to recall that: "Questioning is one-half of knowledge."

Church-School News

The school of the South Church, Portsmouth, N. H., re-opened on September 19, Mr. Hans P. Berna continuing as superintendent. The enrolment in every department last year, from cradle roll to senior classes, was the largest in years, with a total of 118, — 21 officers and teachers and 97 children.

Four standing committees, each composed of three pupils elected from the upper grades of the school, plan the work of the school of the First Unitarian Church of Schenectady, N. Y. These are committees on Program, Music, Publicity, and Hospitality. The Program Committee, under the supervision of the superintendent, plans the program for the general assembly. Leaders for each Sunday are appointed, usually two or three weeks in advance; these leaders choose the songs, usually offer an original prayer, and bring in other material appropriate to the day. Occasionally outside speakers are invited to address the group, such as a Boy Scout Officer on Boy-Scout Sunday, and a local Major on Armistice Sunday. The young people are showing their ability to do things when given an opportunity.

From Indianapolis, Ind., comes the announcement that "Last Sunday broke the record for attendance on the re-opening day at the church school."

The superintendent of the school at Brookfield, Mass., Mrs. B. Florence Phetteplace, reports the opening of the school with a good attendance. "We have," she writes, "nearly one hundred pupils, teachers and workers enrolled, and are an enthusiastic body."

Come On!

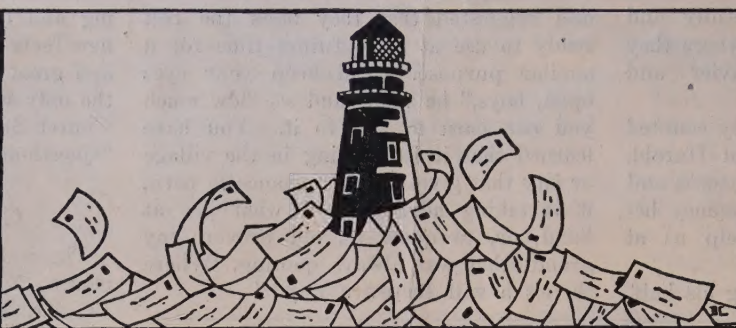
BY DAISY D. STEPHENSON

Come on! Let's gypsy through the fields,
And loiter on the trail;
Let's frolic once, before the snow,
Where craft of milkweed sail.

I know where walnuts cluster thick
In summer overalls;
I'll climb the tree and shake them down —
A shower of hard, green balls.

And Billy knows a chestnut grove;
We'll pry them from their burrs.
And Polly's keen to have us see
That secret pool of hers.

We'll lunch together in the woods;
The finest spot I know;
We'll share our harvest with the squirrels.
It's nutting time, let's go!



THE BEACON CLUB

THE EDITOR'S POST BOX

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Cltb. Address, The Beacon Club, 16 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

MILLBROOK, MASS.

Dear Beacon Club: I joined our Club several years ago but have been a silent member ever since. I go to the Unitarian Sunday School at Duxbury and get *The Beacon* every Sunday. I enjoy the paper very much. I like to solve the enigmas. I answered a letter in *The Beacon* written by a girl my age and have exchanged letters several times. I find it is lots of fun. I am thirteen years of age and am in the eighth grade.

Yours sincerely,
ALICE BERRIMAN.

EGYPT, MASS.

Dear Editor: I am a boy of eight years. I go to the Unitarian Sunday School. Our minister's name is Rev. Cornelius Heyn. I should like to belong to The Beacon Club and wear its pin.

Yours sincerely,
CHASE ABBOTT.

18 WOODSEDGE ROAD,
WEST MEDFORD, MASS.

Dear Editor: I have gone to our Unitarian Sunday School since I was a small child, and have always enjoyed *The Beacon*. Our family has always liked the puzzles best. I am enclosing some Hidden Cities which we made up.

Won't some girl of twelve in the South write to me?

Yours for The Beacon Club,
ELEANOR FISKE.

WARE, MASS.

Dear Editor: I should like very much to have you send me a Beacon Club pin for I have lost mine. I like *The Beacon* very much and should like to see my letter on its last page. That is the one page I like best. It is very interesting. I am enclosing some Twisted States which I should like to see printed.

Your true friend,
MARION L. ALDRICH.

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.
OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.
OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

THE CUBS' COLUMN

Dear Cubs: Mary Eleanor Peirce, Zanesville, Ohio, is the winner of the award for the best verse sent in for publication in this column.

THE EDITOR.

Why?

BY MARY ELEANOR PEIRCE (AGE 14)

Sweet violet in your shady nook
That's close beside the crystal brook,
Where did you get your dress of blue
So daintily attached to you?
Did fairies on some springtime morn
You with a bit of sky adorn?

Oh, little violet from the dell,
Do let me know, in some way tell
Where you received that fragrance rare.
Was it from springtime's balmy air?
Do tell me, dear, I'd like to know
The ways in which you hap'd to grow.

Jehovah, he hath made a plan,
From violet small to mighty man,
And it is not for me to know
The reasons why I'm made to grow.
But, though a violet small am I,
To help the Lord I'll ever try.

Three-year-old Eddie pulled a large bunch of carnations in his grandmother's yard, though strictly forbidden to touch the flowers. A court-martial was held, with grandma as judge advocate. "Edward," she said, "who pulled grandmother's flowers?"

With eyes cast down the little fellow answered, "Kathleen" (his sister).

Then Grandpa, a rather stern old gentleman and a great stickler for truth, spoke up: "Edward, be a man and say, 'I did it'."

With a beaming expression of relief the youngster cried out, "Oh, yes, grandpa did it." — *Boston Transcript*.

Dicky: "My dad is an Elk, a Lion, a Moose and an Eagle."

Micky: "Wot does it cost to see him?"
—*Life*.

PUZZLERS

Enigma

I am composed of 25 letters and am saying by "Poor Richard."

My 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 is a girl's name.

My 7, 24, 10, 12, 15 loves to hoard.

My 16, 9, 13, 14 is a number.

My 11, 17, 18, 19 is one of the parts of speech.

My 25, 21, 22 is an old horse.

My 20, 23, 20 is an important member of the family.

My 3, 2, 19, 22 is a kind of music.

J. T. M.

Anagrams

(Make one word of the letters in the following sentences.)

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. I chance my all. | 5. Snap him, pen. |
| 2. Cart horse. | 6. Trust in men. |
| 3. I roar too. | 7. Men pardon it. |
| 4. Met in a pit. | 8. Tire him, cat. |

Answers to Puzzles in No. 2

Enigma.—Blessed are the happiness makers.

Word Square.—COMET,
OLIVE.
MISER.
EVENS.
TERSE.

A Family of "Sons."—1. Mason. 2. Parson. 3. Person. 4. Garrison. 5. Unison. 6. Venison. 7. Arson. 8. Benison. 9. Treason. 10. Reason. 11. Hobson. 12. Samsom. 13. Edison. 14. Damson.

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